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Employment patterns of families with children

by Sharanjit Uppal

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^{r} revised
x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
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F too unreliable to be published
* significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

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Employment patterns of families with children

by Sharanjit Uppal

Overview of the study

This paper examines the employment patterns of families with children (under the age of 16) over the period from 1976 to 2014, with a particular focus on couple families with children. This article also highlights regional differences in the working patterns of parents and provides additional information on the employment patterns of lone parents.

- In 2014, 69% of couple families with at least one child under 16 were dual-earner families, up from 36% in 1976. Among dual-earner families, almost three-quarters had two parents working full time in 2014.
- In 2014, single-earner families made up 27% of all couple families with children, down from 59% in 1976. Families with two non-working parents accounted for 4% of couple families with children in 2014 (compared with about 6% in 1976).
- Among the 27% of single-earner families, 16% had a stay-at-home mother and 2% had a stay-at-home father. Others (9%) had a parent that was either unemployed, attending school or permanently unable to work.
- Regionally, Alberta had the lowest proportion of dual-earner families in 2014 (65% of couple families with children), while Saskatchewan (74%) and Quebec (73%) had the highest. Alberta also had the highest proportion of families with a stay-at-home parent (26% of couple families with children).
- Stay-at-home mothers had lower levels of education, had more children under 16 and were younger than working mothers. Stay-at-home fathers had lower levels of education, had fewer children, and were older than their working counterparts.

Introduction

Over the past few decades, women's labour force participation has been increasing and so has men's involvement in child care. The increase in labour market participation of women has been mainly driven by changes in cultural attitudes, improved female education levels and general labour market conditions.[1] However, other factors such as flexibility of work arrangements (for example, part-time work) and family support (child care subsidies, child benefits and paid parental leave) have also contributed to changes in the labour force participation of women.[2]

The increased labour force participation of women has led to changes in the employment structure of families, particularly during the 1980s and 1990s. For example, in Canada, the percentage of dual-earner families (with children under 16) rose significantly between 1976 and 1997.[3] Over the same period, the percentage of lone-parent families doubled, and the proportion of families in which the wife was the sole earner grew. These changes have contributed to a steep decline in the percentage of families in which the husband was the sole earner.[4]

These changes in the structure of family employment, especially the increase in dual-earner couples and lone parents, have had a number of consequences. For example, parents face greater challenges balancing work and family responsibilities, and, in order to meet these challenges, some decide to pay for child care and other household services while others alter their

work arrangements—sometimes by having one parent working and another staying at home.[5]

The main objective of this article is to provide an update of the employment patterns of families with children based on Labour Force Survey (LFS) data over the period from 1976 to 2014 (see *Data sources, methods and definitions*). This paper also highlights provincial differences, and provides information on the working patterns of lone parents with children. In this paper, families with children are defined as economic families with at least one child under the age of 16 living with one parent or both parents. In 2014, these families represented 19% of all family units in Canada, including 15% couples and 4% lone parents (Table 1). In 1976, the proportion of family units with children aged less than 16 amounted to 31% (28% couples and 3% lone parents).

The first part of this article examines changes in the employment structure of families with children between 1976 and 2014. The full-time / part-time working patterns of dual-earner couples are also examined for the period. In addition, this paper examines differences in the profiles of stay-at-home parents, single-earner and dual-earner couples, and lone parents. Readers should note, however, that this study does not attempt to explain factors contributing to changes in household labour supply over time or those associated with the distribution of paid work among couples or the effects of young children on female labour supply.[6] Rather, it provides an overview of some historical and recent trends on the employment structure of Canadian families, and provides additional information on the characteristics of working families. Work refers to paid work throughout this paper.

Increase in the share of families with two working parents between 1976 and 2014

How are families with children distributed across employment categories? This section provides overall information about the distribution of families with children under the age of 16, including lone parents. Other categories include couple families with a single earner, with two earners, and without earners. Percentages in this section are expressed as a proportion of all families with at least one child under 16.

In 1976, the majority of families with at least one child under 16 were single-earner families (53%), most often with a working father and a non-working mother (Chart 1.1). Dual-earner couples accounted for one-third of families with children, and lone-parent families (working or not)—headed by a mother in the vast majority of cases—accounted for about one-tenth.

During subsequent decades—particularly in the 1980s and the 1990s—the labour force participation of women increased significantly. The employment rate among females rose from 42% in 1976 to 58% in 2014. For those aged 15 to 64, the changes were even more pronounced as the rates increased from 47% in 1976 to 69% in 2014. The employment rate among males declined slightly over the period, from 73% in 1976 to 65% in 2014. For those aged 15 to 64, the employment rate remained relatively stable (79% in 1976, compared with 75% in 2014).[7]

The increase in female employment rates led to notable changes in the working patterns of Canadian families with children (Chart 1.2). The share of single-earner families with the father as the sole earner declined the most, from 51% in 1976 to 17% in 2014. Over the same period, the share of dual-earner couples rose, increasing from 33% in 1976 to 55% in 2014. The share of female lone parent families also doubled over the period (from 8% in 1976 to 16% in 2014).

Table 1
Distribution of family units by family type, 1976 and 2014

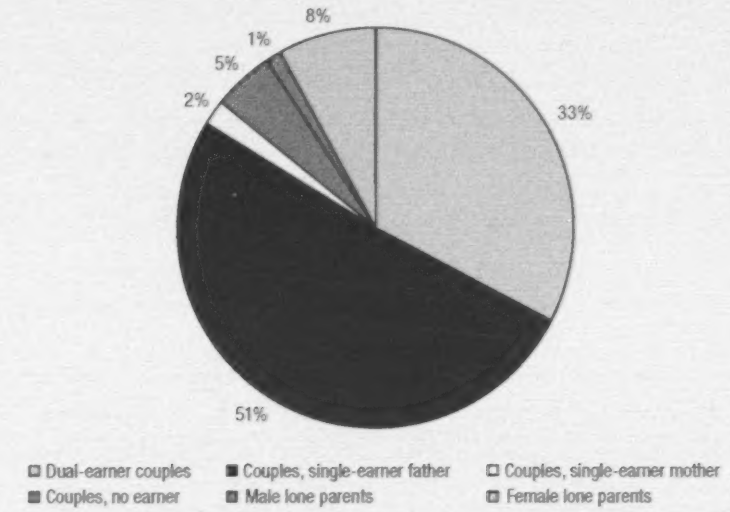
	1976	2014
	percentage	
Unattached individuals	21.6	29.2
Couples	67.2	54.3
with children aged less than 16	28.3	15.3
without children aged less than 16	38.9	39.1
Lone parents	8.2	10.7
with children aged less than 16	2.9	3.9
without children aged less than 16	5.4	6.9
Other	3.0	5.8

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1976 and 2014.

More than one-half of couples with children were working full time in 2014

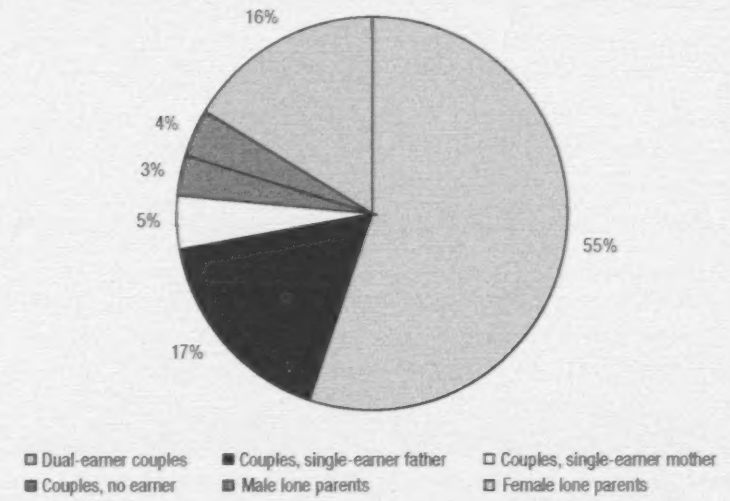
In this section, more information is provided about the working patterns of couple families with children aged less than 16, i.e., dual-earner families, single-earner families and non-earner families (see *Lone-parent families* for additional information

Chart 1.1
Distribution of families with at least one child under 16, by employment status, 1976



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1976.

Chart 1.2
Distribution of families with at least one child under 16, by employment status, 2014



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 2014.

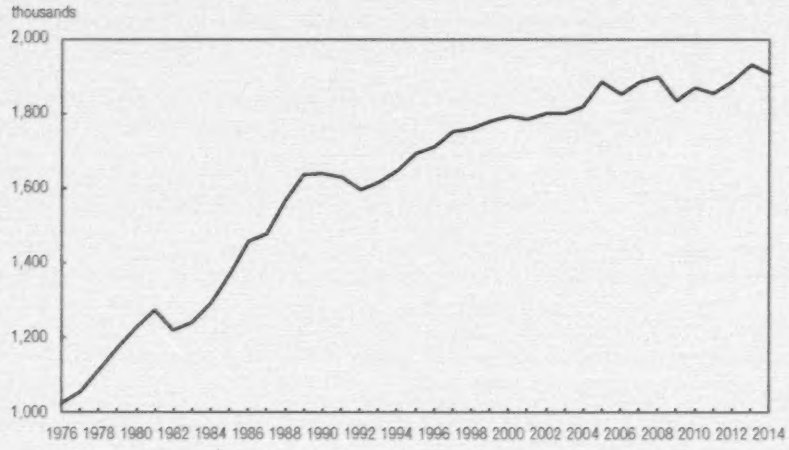
about the working patterns of lone parents). Couple families with children aged less than 16 numbered 2.8 million in 2014, about the same number as in 1976.

Over the past four decades, the number of dual-earner families has been on the rise, almost doubling from 1.0 million families in 1976 to 1.9 million families in 2014 (Chart 2). The entire period can be broken down into three distinct sub-periods. First, there was a period of relatively strong growth, when the number of dual-earner couples increased by 60% between 1976 and 1989. This was followed by a period of slower growth, when the number of families in such a situation increased by 15% between 1989 and 2005. Finally, the number of dual-earner families increased only marginally (1%) in recent years (between 2005 and 2014).

Although the number of dual-earner families increased in nearly each year during the period, some years witnessed a decline, mostly as a result of economic stagnation. For example, the unemployment rate increased from 7.6% in 1981 to 11.0% in 1982. During this two-year period, the number of dual-earner couples declined by 4%. Similar trends were also seen for 1990-92 and 2008-09.

Among couples with children aged less than 16, the proportion of dual-earners increased from 36% in 1976 to 69% in 2014 (Table 2). Most dual-earner couples had two spouses working full time, and this proportion rose over the period. In 1976, 24% of couples with children had two full-time working parents (representing two-thirds of dual-earner couples). By 2014, this proportion had risen to more than

Chart 2
Number of dual-earner couples with at least one child under 16, 1976 to 2014



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1976 to 2014.

Table 2
Employment status of couple families with at least one child under 16

	1976	2014	1976	2014
	thousands		percentage	
Total couples	**2,825**	**2,753**	**100.0**	**100.0**
Dual earners[1]	**1,014**	**1,901**	**35.9**	**69.1**
Both working full time	673	1,402	23.8	50.9
Husband full time, Wife part time	329	422	11.7	15.3
Wife full time, Husband part time	7	55	0.2	2.0
Both part time	5	23	0.2	0.8
Single earners (SE)	**1,657**	**736**	**58.6**	**26.7**
SE working father	1,593	585	56.4	21.2
Mother unemployed	95	86	3.3	3.1
Mother not in the labour force	1,498	499	53.0	18.1
Permanently unable to work	3	12	0.1	0.4
Attending school	30	41	1.1	1.5
Staying home[2]	1,466	446	51.9	16.2
SE working mother	64	151	2.3	5.5
Father unemployed	33	70	1.2	2.5
Father not in the labour force	31	81	1.1	2.9
Permanently unable to work	6	11	0.2	0.4
Attending school	4	16	0.1	0.6
Staying home[2]	21	54	0.7	2.0
Non-earners	**154**	**116**	**5.4**	**4.2**

1. Excludes couples in the Armed Forces.
2. Defined as two-parent families with at least one child under 16 at home, with one non-working parent who is not in the labour force, excluding non-working parents who are unemployed, attending school or unable to work due to a disability.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1976 and 2014.

50% (or three-quarters of all dual-earner couples). This suggests that women did not only increase their labour market participation, but also their work intensity. The share of couples with a full-time working husband and a part-time working wife also rose as a proportion of all couples, albeit more slowly (from 12% to 15%).

Among single-earner couples, the non-earner can either be actively seeking work (unemployed) or not (out of the labour force). Among those who are not in the labour force, some may be permanently unable to work or going to school; these parents are not considered as stay-at-home parents in this paper. The remaining parents who are not in the labour force are defined as stay-at-home fathers or mothers.

Single-earner families represented 27% of all couple families with children in 2014, down from 59% in 1976. In most cases, the father was far more likely to be the sole working parent, even in 2014 (21% of all couple families with children, representing about 8 in 10 single-earner families with children).

However, there has been a significant increase in the number of single-earner families with the mother as the sole earner. In 2014, the 151,000 single-earner families with a working mother accounted for 21% of single-earner families (compared with just 4% in 1976), and for just under 6% of all couple families with children.

Among single-earner families, the situation of the non-working parent varied depending on whether the family had a mother or father as the sole earner. Among father-earner families, most mothers were out of the labour force as a stay-at-home

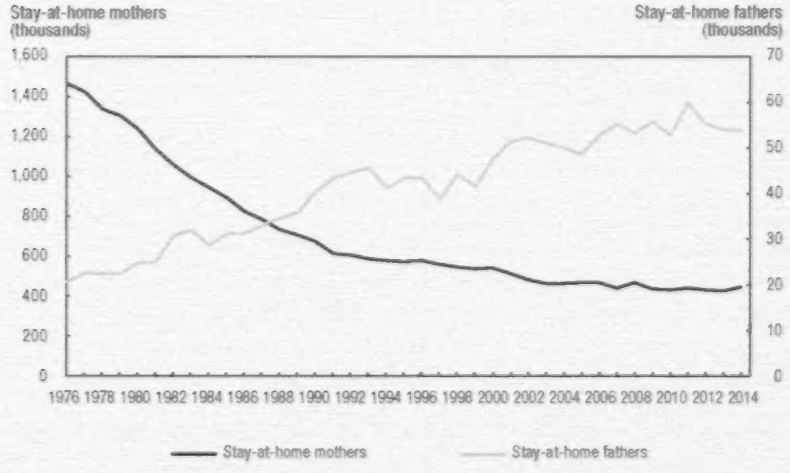
parent. The number of stay-at-home mothers as a proportion of non-working mothers, however, declined over time. In 1976, for example, 9 in 10 non-working mothers in a single-earner family were stay-at-home parents. The rest were either unemployed, students, or permanently unable to work. In 2014, three-quarters of non-working mothers were stay-at-home moms, while one-quarter were either unemployed, students or unable to work.

In contrast, non-working fathers were less likely than mothers to be stay-at-home parents. Among single-earner families with a working mother, approximately one-half of the fathers were unemployed in both years (52% in 1976 and 46% in 2014), and about one-third were stay-at-home fathers (32% in 1976 and 36% in 2014).

In terms of numbers, single-earner families with a stay-at-home parent dropped from 1.5 million in 1976 to 500,000 in 2014. Families with stay-at-home mothers declined by 1 million, whereas those with stay-at-home fathers increased by 33,000 (Chart 3). The number of stay-at-home mothers declined in almost every year between 1976 and 2014. The majority of the decline occurred between 1976 and 1991 (851,000, compared with 169,000 between 1991 and 2014).

Conversely, even though the number of single-earner families with a stay-at-home father experienced an upward trend, some periods were characterized by a decline. Most of these periods of decline were periods of expanding employment following an economic slowdown (for example, 1984, 1994 to 1997, 2003 to 2005, and 2010).

Chart 3
Number of stay-at-home mothers and fathers with at least one child under 16, 1976 to 2014



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1976 to 2014.

As a result of these trends, stay-at-home fathers accounted for 11% of all Canadian families with a stay-at-home parent in 2014. This compared with less than 2% in 1976.

Alberta had the highest proportion of stay-at-home parent families in 2014

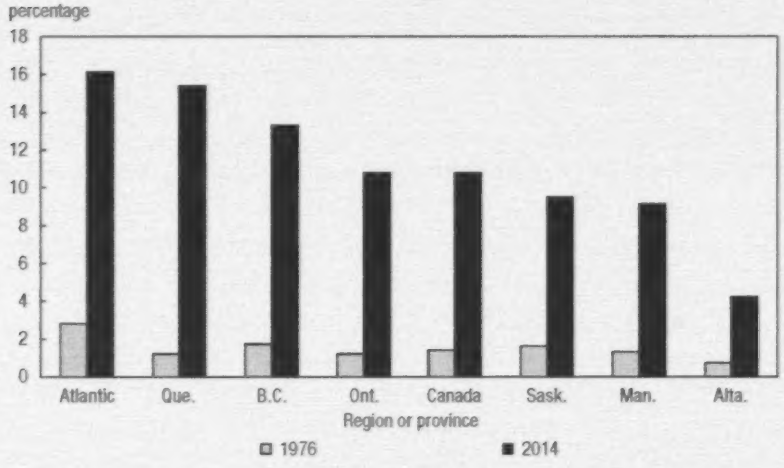
As a proportion of couple families with children, families with a stay-at-home parent accounted for 53% of families in 1976 and 18% in 2014. In 1976, Quebec had the highest proportion of couple families with a stay-at-home parent (59%). At the other end of the spectrum, Ontario had the lowest proportion (49%).

Over the period, the proportion of stay-at-home parent families declined in all provinces. However, the magnitude of the change was not the same across provinces. In 2014, Alberta had the highest proportion of couple families with a stay-at-home parent (26%), while Quebec had the lowest proportion of stay-at-home parent families (13%). This suggests that the proportion of stay-at-home parent families declined faster in Quebec than in any other region of the country.

The number of stay-at-home fathers also increased in all provinces, albeit at different rates. One way to examine the changing profile of stay-at-home parent families is to examine the proportion of stay-at-home families with the father at home. In 1976, for instance, the Atlantic provinces had the highest proportion of stay-at-home fathers (3% of families with a stay-at-home parent) while other provinces had proportions below 2% (Chart 4).

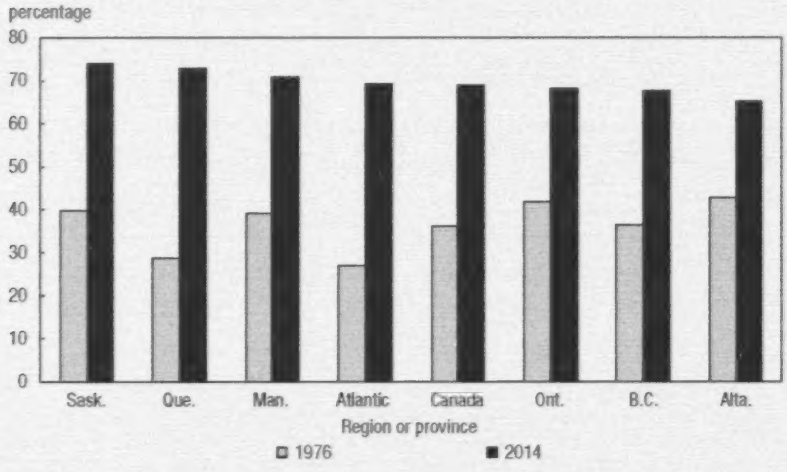
Between 1976 and 2014, the proportion of stay-at-home fathers increased faster in Quebec (a

Chart 4
Stay-at-home fathers[1] as a proportion of families with a stay-at-home parent, by region or province, 1976 and 2014



1. Earning mother.
Note: Atlantic provinces have been grouped together because of sample size issues.
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1976 and 2014.

Chart 5
Dual-earning couples as a proportion of couple families with at least one child under 16, by region or province, 1976 and 2014



Note: Atlantic provinces have been grouped together because of sample size issues.
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1976 and 2014.

14 percentage-point increase) and in the Atlantic provinces (a 13 percentage-point increase). The increase, however, was smaller in Alberta (less than 4 percentage points). This led to a widening gap of the provincial difference in the proportion of stay-at-home fathers. In 2014, the Atlantic provinces still had the highest proportion of families with a stay-at-home father (16% of families with a stay-at-home parent), followed closely by Quebec (15%). At the opposite end of the spectrum, Alberta had the lowest proportion (4%).[8]

Interprovincial differences in the proportion of dual-earner families were also important (Chart 5). In 1976, Alberta had the highest proportion of dual-earner couples (43% of couple families with children) followed by Ontario (42%). The Atlantic provinces and Quebec had the lowest proportions (27% and 29%, respectively). Between 1976 and 2014, the proportion of dual-earner couples increased in all provinces, but not equally across provinces. The proportion of dual-earner couples increased the least in Alberta, while it rose faster in Quebec and in the Atlantic provinces. As a result, Alberta had the lowest proportion of dual-earner couples (65%) in 2014, while Saskatchewan (74%) and Quebec (73%) had the highest proportions.

Stay-at-home mothers are younger and have younger children than working mothers

Stay-at-home mothers, single-earner mothers and mothers who are part of dual-earner couples may not have the same characteristics, even if they are all in couple families with at least one child under the age of 16.

For example, stay-at-home mothers were slightly younger on average than both single-earner mothers and mothers who were part of a dual-earner couple (Table 3). The average age of stay-at-home mothers was 37 years, compared with 39 years for single-earner mothers and 38 years for mothers who were in a dual-earning couple.

Correspondingly, stay-at-home mothers were also more likely to have younger children. In 2014, 58% of them had at least one child under the age of 5 at home. In comparison, this was the case for 36% of single-earner mothers and 43% of dual-earner mothers. Furthermore, stay-at-home mothers were twice as likely as single-earner and dual-earner mothers to have more than two children under 16.

Stay-at-home mothers were also more likely to have lower levels of education. In 2014, 41% of them had a high school diploma or less. In comparison, this was the case for 28% of single-earner mothers and 20% of dual-earner mothers.

Information on the previous occupations of stay-at-home parents was available for those who worked during the year preceding the survey. About 17% of stay-at-home mothers in 2014 worked in 2013. The comparable proportion for stay-at-home fathers was 36%. More than one-third of stay-at-home mothers who had worked in 2013 were employed in sales and service occupations. This compared with about one-quarter of single-earner mothers and one-fifth of dual-earning mothers who were part of this occupational group. Conversely, single-earner and dual-earner mothers were more likely than stay-at-home mothers to be working in health-related occupations and occupations in social science, education, government and religion.

Unlike stay-at-home mothers, who were younger than mothers in single-earner and dual-earner families, stay-at-home fathers were older (average age of 43 years) than fathers in single-earner (40 years) and dual-earner families (41 years). However, as was the case for stay-at-home mothers, stay-at-home fathers were more likely to have lower levels of education. In 2014, 44% of them had a high school diploma or less. In comparison, 33% of single-earner fathers and 27% of dual-earner fathers had similar levels of education.

Table 3
Characteristics of mothers and fathers in couple families with at least one child under 16, by family employment status, 2014

	Mother			Father		
	Stay-at-home	Single-earner	Dual-earner	Stay-at-home	Single-earner	Dual-earner
	average					
Average age	36.6	39.4	38.3	43.2	39.6	40.7
Average number of children under 16	2.0	1.7	1.7	1.7	2.0	1.7
	percentage					
More than two children under 16	25.4	13.3	13.3	13.3	25.4	13.3
At least one child under 5 at home	57.7	36.1	42.6	36.1	57.7	42.5
All children aged 5 to 15	42.4	63.9	57.4	63.9	42.4	57.5
Education						
Less than high school	11.9	6.0	3.3	13.7	11.4	6.1
High school diploma	29.1	21.5	16.6	30.8	21.5	20.8
College/trades diploma or certificate	29.3	34.3	38.3	28.6	33.3	39.8
University degree	29.7	38.2	41.9	27.0	33.8	33.4
Worked last year	17.1	..	..	35.8	..	..
Occupation[1]						
Management	4.9	7.1	7.1	F	12.0	12.6
Business, finance and administration	22.6	20.2	25.6	F	9.8	10.3
Natural and applied sciences	2.6	3.3	4.4	F	13.6	14.0
Health	5.6	14.5	14.6	F	2.4	3.3
Social science, education, government and religion	15.2	18.4	19.7	F	4.2	6.2
Art, culture, recreation and sport	4.3	4.9	3.8	F	1.7	2.2
Sales and service	36.3	25.6	19.7	17.0	12.9	14.9
Trades, transport and equipment operators	2.9	F	1.7	37.9	29.5	26.0
Primary industry	2.4	F	1.1	12.6	6.9	4.0
Processing, manufacturing and utilities	3.4	3.4	2.4	F	6.4	6.6
Sector[1]						
Public	21.0	29.9	32.6	11.2	11.0	17.5
Private	70.0	58.1	53.6	79.3	67.9	62.6
Self-employed	9.0	11.6	13.9	9.9	20.7	19.9
	average					
Average usual weekly hours	..	35.7	34.4	..	41.6	40.5
Average hourly earnings ($)	..	25.22	26.10	..	30.36	30.76
Average weekly earnings ($)	..	908.34	897.95	..	1,249.68	1,225.58

.. not available for a specific reference period

F too unreliable to be published

1. For stay-at-home parents, occupation and sector refer to their occupation and sector in 2013, and apply to those who worked in 2013.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 2014.

More than one-half of stay-at-home fathers who had worked in 2013 were in trades, transport and equipment operator and related occupations, or in primary industry. Conversely, more than one-third of single-earner and dual-earner fathers were employed in management occupations, or in natural and applied sciences or in business, finance and administrative occupations. This is expected, as single-earner and dual-earner fathers had higher levels of educational attainment than stay-at-home fathers. Dual-earner fathers were also more likely than other fathers to be working in the public sector (18% versus 11%).[9]

Conclusion

Over the past few decades, the labour force participation of women has increased as a result of a change in cultural attitudes, improved education of females, and generally improved labour market conditions. This has led to a change in the employment patterns of Canadian families. This paper used LFS data from 1976 to 2014 to examine some of these changes among families with children under the age of 16. Between 1976 and 2014, for example, the share of couple families with the father as the sole earner declined from 56% to 21%. During the same time period, the share of dual-earner couples almost doubled among couple families with children, from 36% to 69%. Families with two full-time working parents now represent at least one-half of all couple families with children in Canada.

Overall, the number of families with a stay-at-home parent declined from 1.5 million in 1976 to 500,000 in 2014. This was largely due to a decline in the number of stay-at-home mothers. Of all stay-at-home families, the father stayed home in 11% of cases in 2014. This compared to less than 2% in 1976.

The profile of stay-at-home parents was largely different from that of other parents. Stay-at-home mothers were generally younger and more likely to have children under the age of 5 than single-earner and dual-earner mothers. Conversely, dual-earner parents were more likely to be university-educated than stay-at-home parents. Finally, stay-at-home parents who worked during the previous year (in 2013) also tended to be in different occupations than dual-earner or single-earner parents.

Sharanjit Uppal *is a senior analyst with the Labour Statistics Division at Statistics Canada.*

Data sources, methods and definitions

Data sources

This study uses annual data (1976 to 2014) from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). The LFS is a monthly survey that collects labour market information for all household members aged 15 and over as well as demographic and family relationship information for all household members, making it possible to derive family types. Excluded from the survey's coverage are persons living on reserves and other Aboriginal settlements, full-time members of the Canadian Armed Forces, and the institutionalized population. These groups together represent an exclusion of less than 2% of the Canadian population aged 15 and over.

The LFS began collecting earnings information from all employees for their main job in 1997. Respondents are asked to report their hourly rate of pay or their regular salary (weekly, bi-weekly, etc.) before taxes and other deductions, including tips, commissions and bonuses. Hourly and weekly earnings are calculated in conjunction with usual paid work hours per week.

In this study, families are classified based on the type of economic family. Couple families include married couples and common-law couples. Same-sex couples cannot, however, be identified with LFS data.

Definitions

Single-earner family: a couple family, with at least one child under 16 at home, who reported that only one parent was employed in the survey reference week, either part time or full time, while the other was unemployed or not in the labour force; similarly, in a **dual-earner family** both parents are employed.

Stay-at-home parent: a person in a couple family with at least one child under 16 at home, who did not have a job or business, was not looking for work, was not attending school, and was not permanently unable to work during the survey reference week; parents on maternity/parental leave are not considered to be stay-at-home if they have a job to which to they are returning—they are considered employed and absent from work.

Employment rate: the number of persons employed in a group (e.g. age, sex, marital status, family type) expressed as a percentage of the population for that group.

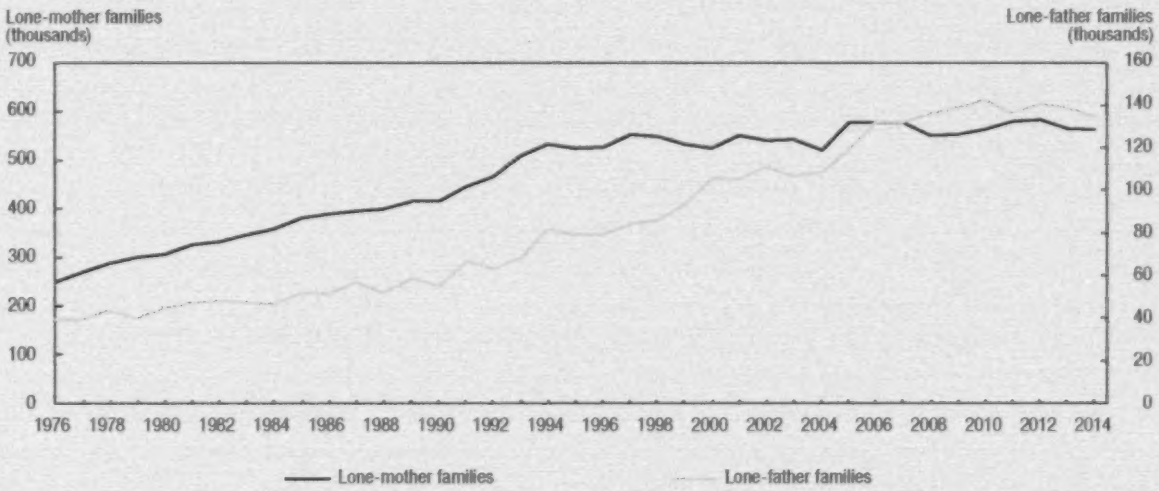
Full-time work: refers to those who work at least 30 hours per week in their main job; **part-time work** refers to those who work less than 30 hours per week.

Lone-parent families

There has been a notable increase in the number of lone-parent families with children—from 289,000 in 1976 to 698,000 in 2014. Lone-parent families accounted for 20% of families with children aged less than 16, up from 9% in 1976. Of note, lone mothers accounted for 81% of lone-parent families in 2014 (compared with 86% in 1976).[1]

The number of both lone-father and lone-mother families increased during the period. However, most of the growth in the number of lone-mother families occurred in the first half of the period, i.e., from 1976 to 1994 (Chart A.1). In contrast, the number of lone-father families was relatively stable during the first half of the period, but increased during the second half (after 1990).

Chart A.1
Number of lone-mother and lone-father families with at least one child under 16, 1976 to 2014



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1976 to 2014.

Employed lone mothers were older, had higher levels of education and were less likely to have younger children than stay-at-home lone mothers. Among stay-at-home lone mothers, 8% had a university degree, while this was the case of 25% of employed lone mothers (Table A.1). These proportions, however, were lower than for mothers in couples, not only among those who were employed (about 4 in 10 women in this category had a university degree), but also among those who were staying home (3 in 10).

Both lone mothers and lone fathers were less likely to be employed than those who were in a couple. In 2014, 69% of lone mothers and 82% of lone fathers were working. The comparable rates for their couple counterparts were 75% and 90%. However, as was the case for females in couple families, lone mothers registered significant gains in employment over the period as their employment rate moved up from 48% in 1976 to 69% in 2014 (while remaining stable among lone fathers). Previous research indicated that recent gains in employment and earnings of Canadian lone mothers aged 40 and over were a result of demographic effects whereby the better-educated baby boom generation replaced earlier cohorts.[2]

Lone mothers were more likely to work in sales and service occupations than females in couple families. Similarly, lone fathers were more likely to be working in occupations that require relatively lower levels of education.

Lone parent families (continued)

Table A.1
Characteristics of lone mothers and lone fathers with at least one child under 16, by employment status, 2014

	Lone mother		Lone father	
	Employed	Stay-at-home	Employed	Stay-at-home
	average			
Average age	38.5	34.7	41.8	42.2
Average number of children under 16	1.5	1.9	1.5	1.6
	percentage			
More than two children under 16	8.3	23.5	7.4	F
At least one child under 5 at home	25.1	51.9	17.5	24.3
All children aged 5 to 15	74.9	48.1	82.5	75.7
Education				
Less than high school	6.5	27.3	9.3	F
High school diploma	22.1	34.5	23.8	F
College/trades diploma or certificate	46.9	30.4	40.8	F
University degree	24.5	7.8	26.1	F
Employed				
Full time	78.3	...	93.7	...
Part time	21.7	...	6.3	...
Occupation[1]				
Management	5.6	F	11.1	F
Business, finance and administration	24.4	F	8.7	F
Natural and applied sciences	3.2	F	13.3	F
Health	12.6	F	F	F
Social science, education, government service and religion	16.5	F	5.1	F
Art, culture, recreation and sport	3.1	F	F	F
Sales and service	27.6	F	17.9	F
Trades, transport and equipment operators	3.1	F	27.2	F
Primary industry	0.7	F	4.6	F
Processing, manufacturing and utilities	3.3	F	7.0	F
Sector[1]				
Public	28.4	F	18.2	F
Private	60.9	F	63.3	F
Self-employed	10.7	F	18.5	F
	average			
Average usual weekly hours[1]	34.8	...	40.1	...
Average hourly earnings ($)[1]	23.14	...	29.48	...
Average weekly earnings ($)[1]	809.32	...	1,169.39	...

... not applicable
F too unreliable to be published
1. Data on occupation, sector, hours and earnings are for the employed population.
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 2014.

1. Shannon (2009) examines the rise in Canadian lone-mother employment rates during the 1990s. He found that the increased lone-mother employment rate was partly due to changes in income-support policies, which increased the incentive to work. Myles et al. (2007 and 2009) found that most of the gains in employment and earnings of Canadian lone mothers aged 40 and over were a result of demographic effects whereby the better-educated baby boom generation replaced earlier cohorts.

2. See Myles et al. (2007, 2009). In 1976, however, lone mothers were more likely to be employed than mothers in couple families (48% versus 38%). See also Dooley (1994) for a comparison of the labour supply of married and lone mothers with children under 18 in Canada.

Notes

1. See Jaumotte (2004).
2. See Nakamura and Nakamura (1981); Connelly (1992); Eissa (1995); Jaumotte (2004); Baker et al. (2008); Milligan (2014).
3. See Marshall (1998). Similar studies have been conducted by Walling (2005) and Kent (2009) for the United Kingdom, and by Fox et al. (2013) for the United States.
4. See Marshall (1998).
5. See Marshall (1994).
6. Some studies of interest in these areas include Cherchye et al. (2012); Gershuny and Robinson (1988); Apps and Rees (1997); and Nakamura and Nakamura (1994). Nakamura and Nakamura (1992) provide a comprehensive summary of earlier studies on the effects of children on female labour supply.
7. See Table A.2 for additional information about the employment rates of men and women by family type.
8. One explanation for these trends could be the seasonal nature of work in Atlantic Canada and a strong economy in Alberta.
9. The qualitative conclusions for age and education were similar in 1976 and 2014. Among mothers, those who stayed at home were younger while those who were single earners were older. The opposite was true for fathers. Stay-at-home mothers were more likely to have children under the age of 5. Dual-earner parents were more likely to have a university degree than stay-at-home parents. Lastly, dual-earner parents were more likely to be working in the public sector. Comparable data on occupations are not available for 1976. Data on earnings are only available starting in 1997.

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Appendix

Table A.2
Employment rates by family type, with and without children aged less than 16, 1976 and 2014

	1976			2014		
	All	Men	Women	All	Men	Women
	percentage					
All	**57.1**	**72.7**	**41.9**	**61.4**	**65.4**	**57.6**
Unattached individuals	56.9	66.6	48.3	53.8	61.1	46.2
Couples	57.9	74.3	40.7	63.8	67.2	60.5
with children aged less than 16	64.7	91.1	38.3	82.0	89.7	74.5
without children aged less than 16	52.9	62.5	42.5	56.7	58.5	54.9
Lone parents	50.9	56.2	48.0	61.9	58.7	63.7
with children aged less than 16	52.8	81.5	48.3	71.4	82.0	68.7
without children aged less than 16	49.9	52.2	47.7	56.6	52.8	59.6
Other	45.4	58.4	36.1	55.3	60.0	51.2

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, 1976 and 2014.